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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8372
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000026

SIPDIS

BAGHDAD FOR AMBASSADOR ERELI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/15/2029
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KWBG](#) [IR](#) [BA](#)
SUBJECT: BAHRAIN: IRANIAN ENVOY ON GAZA

REF: A. MANAMA 19
[1](#)B. MANAMA 24

Classified By: CDA Christopher Henzel for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) Iranian Minister of Culture Mahmoud Hussein Safar-Harandi visited Bahrain briefly January 14, and delivered to King Hamad a message on Gaza. (According to media reports, several Iranian envoys are touring the region and Europe with similar messages.) Safar-Harandi also met with local media and criticized Israel, the U.S. and Egypt over the Gaza conflict.

[1](#)2. (C) MFA Under Secretary Abdulaziz bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, who stood in for the vacationing Foreign Minister at the lunch in honor of Safar-Harandi, told CDA that the GOB politely heard out Safar-Harandi's message criticizing U.S. and Egyptian diplomatic efforts, but had no intention of changing Bahrain's approach. "The Iranians, as always, want to be players" and believe the Gaza situation has created new opportunities for them, he said, but the GOB saw Egypt's diplomacy as the best hope for an end to the conflict.

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